



## Pima County Community College District Administrative Procedure

<i>AP Title:</i>	<b>Qualifying Faculty to Teach Credit Bearing Courses</b>
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<i>Sponsoring Unit/Department:</i>	Office of the Provost
<i>Policy Title(s) &amp; No(s).</i>	Faculty Qualifications Standards, BP 3.01
<i>Legal Reference:</i>	
<i>Cross Reference:</i>	

### **PURPOSE**

As the first step in providing quality instruction, Pima Community College establishes minimum qualifications for all instructional faculty and educational support faculty (for the purposes of this document referred to as “faculty”), who teach credit bearing courses including, part-time, adjunct faculty, dual-enrollment, temporary, and those in contractual and consortial programs.

The procedure for Faculty and instructors teaching non-credit bearing courses will meet specific standards established in their respective divisions and are not covered by this Administrative Procedure.

These standards are the minimal threshold of content knowledge or experience. Many other factors can be considered to hire a faculty member.

Minimum qualifications standards are approved by the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (Provost) in consultation with faculty in each discipline.

The qualification and verification process described here documents that faculty meet the established minimum qualifications for the disciplines they teach. Hiring managers, department heads, directors, deans, or program managers are responsible for identifying faculty best suited for particular course assignments within a discipline.

Unless the Provost determines otherwise, faculty meeting previous minimum standards remain qualified to teach in those disciplines provided standards set by external accrediting or other regulatory agencies are still met.

## SECTION 1: Definitions

1.1 The **Faculty Minimum Qualifications Requirements (FMQRs)** grid lists the minimum standards required to teach in a particular discipline, applied as broadly as possible. (See Section 2.1)

1.2 Credentials

For these purposes a credential is defined as an attestation of qualification, competence, or authority issued to an individual by a qualified third party, such as a regionally accredited educational institution or otherwise generally accepted authority.

Academic credentials will be the primary mechanism used to ascertain minimal faculty qualifications. In general, faculty must possess an academic degree at least one level above the level at which they teach. Specifically:

- Faculty teaching **academic or transfer courses** must hold a master's degree or higher in the field or a closely related field as determined by the discipline faculty. If the degree is not in the discipline/subfield taught, that faculty member must have completed a master's degree or higher in another field plus a minimum of 18 graduate semester credits in the appropriate discipline/subfield. Priority may be given to those with a degree in the discipline.
- Faculty teaching **occupational, career and technical education** courses should hold a bachelor's degree in the field of study and/or a combination of

education, industry-recognized certification, training and work experience as defined by discipline faculty. These qualifications are allowable even in instances where these courses transfer, which is an increasing practice.

- Educational Support Faculty/Librarians must meet faculty minimum requirements as determined by the discipline faculty.
- Faculty teaching **developmental courses** must hold a bachelor's degree or higher. If the degree is not in the discipline/subfield taught, that faculty member must have completed a minimum of 24 upper and/or lower division semester credits in the appropriate discipline/subfield.
- Faculty teaching courses in programs that are separately accredited or externally regulated must meet any requirements established by the program's accreditation or regulatory bodies.

### 1.3 Equivalency

Equivalency to the faculty minimum qualifications standards may be demonstrated through academic credentials, breadth and depth of work experience outside of the classroom and/or eminence against expected discipline outcomes for the discipline or courses proposed to be taught.

Equivalency is meant neither to raise nor lower minimum thresholds and will be used at the discretion of the discipline faculty. Given the context of the mission, the College considers equivalency only under special circumstances in which the goal is to significantly enrich the educational experience for the student, and not solely as an alternate route to qualification.

External program accreditation and/or regulatory requirements must be met prior to consideration of equivalency.

## SECTION 2: Procedures

### 2.1 Qualifications Grid Review Cycle

The Faculty Minimum Qualifications Requirements (FMQRs) grid is housed in the Provost's office and contains Discipline Faculty Committee (DFC) identified qualifying fields of study and any other minimum requirements. Every three years, DFCs review, discuss, vote and when appropriate, submit the revised FMQRs. The revisions, in the format of FMQRs grid, is submitted along with the discussion

points, through the Discipline Coordinator to the Provost. The Provost approves or denies the proposed changes effective July 1.

## 2.2 Off-cycle Request for Updating Qualification Grid

In general, changes to minimum qualifications are not made unless justified and necessary. The same process should be followed as above. The Provost will approve or deny a proposed change within 30 days.

## 2.3 Credentials

The Analysts qualify and verify faculty when the credentials and other qualifications clearly meet the FMQRs.

Foreign degrees and/or coursework must be evaluated by third party evaluation agencies approved by Pima Community College.

A representative of the DFC, typically a Discipline Coordinator may be contacted when a subject matter expert opinion is needed to validate the credentials and other qualifications against the FMQRs grid. Most typically the representative is reviewing coursework or letters of work experience to ensure alignment with the discipline requirements. The representative documents their findings with rationale and forwards them to the Faculty qualification office.

## 2.4 Equivalency

Equivalency to the faculty minimum qualifications standards may be demonstrated through academic credentials, breadth and depth of work experience, tested experience outside of the classroom and/or eminence that have provided preparation equivalent to the requirements set forth in the FMQRs grid for the discipline in question.

Teaching experience alone is insufficient for demonstrating equivalence.

Some disciplines may have external requirements that do not allow for equivalency.

Disciplines or subdisciplines that opt to qualify faculty using equivalency must vote to approve the use of equivalency as an acceptable practice for their discipline. Those disciplines must then develop a Discipline Qualifications Equivalency Rubric prior to evaluating any candidate. This rubric will be used to

determine if a candidate's experience, education, training and/or eminence in the field have provided a level of preparation equivalent to the minimum qualifications established in the FMQRs Grid.

When a candidate is being considered for equivalency the Dean, Department Head or Discipline Coordinator populate the Discipline Qualifications Equivalency Rubric using evidence about the individual under consideration for equivalency. If they believe the candidate has sufficient evidence to demonstrate an equivalent to the minimum qualifications they share the recommendation with at least one other discipline faculty member for feedback. If there is no other discipline faculty, someone teaching in a closely related field should provide feedback.

The proposal with Dean, Department Head and/or Discipline Coordinator recommendation and the feedback from additional faculty is reviewed by the Executive Director for Faculty Affairs presented to the Provost for final review and approval or denial.

The candidate for the equivalency will be informed of their status by the Faculty Qualification area.

Any revisions to the general process for determining equivalence/tested experience must be approved by the Faculty Senate. Changes to the disciplinary equivalency rubric must be approved by the DFC.

## 2.5 Provost

The Provost is the final arbitrator and responsible for ensuring the consistency and integrity of the qualification process.

### **SECTION 3: Appeals**

The Provost is responsible for managing appeals of decisions made through the qualification or equivalency process.

The Provost or designee will investigate and resolve all appeals and other disputes within 60 days of receiving a written concern.